Activity Reports
2015 – 2016

American Academy of Optometry

American Optometric Foundation

Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry

Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Society

College of Optometrists in Vision Development

International Association of Optometric Executives

National Academy of Practice in Optometry

National Association of VA Optometrists

Neuro Optometric Rehabilitation Association

North Central States Optometric Council

Northern Rockies Optometric Conference

Optometric Extension Program Foundation

Optometry Cares® - The AOA Foundation / Optometric Historical Society

Southern Council of Optometrists, Inc.

World Council of Optometry
The American Academy of Optometry's (AAO’s) objective is to “promote the art, science, and research of vision care through lifelong learning.” It is a call for involvement in all facets of optometric endeavor: supporting basic research and shepherding advances from the laboratories to exam rooms around the world.

The Academy continued to see growth in membership in 2015, inducting 240 new Fellows into the Academy, up 2.4% over 2014. Student membership also increased by 20% from 2014 to 2015. A record 1,400 students attended Academy 2015 New Orleans, representing a 40% increase over 2014 student attendance, and a total of 512 students fulfilled the Student Fellowship requirements in 2015.

Academy 2015 New Orleans was the largest meeting of the Academy to date, with 7,489 in attendance (18% growth over 2014). Average attendance over the past five years is 6,133, with an average yearly growth rate of 5.7%. The 2015 Plenary Session, “Ocular Melanomas: Past, Present and Future,” featured Drs. Carol and Jerry Shields from the Wills Eye Hospital. Dr. Carol Shields detailed the features of nevi and how to distinguish a nevus from a melanoma and the role of imaging. Dr. Jerry Shields discussed the evolution of diagnosis and treatment, as well as the controversy over whether or not to treat a nevus before it begins to grow, and its impact on mortality.

Academy 2015 New Orleans also featured the first ever Joint American Academy of Optometry and American Academy of Ophthalmology Symposium on “Amblyopia and Beyond: Current Evidence-Based Pediatric Eye Care.” The symposium featured three optometrists and three ophthalmologists, all of whom are experts in the field of pediatrics: Drs. Susan Cotter, Bruce Moore, Donald Mutti, Mary Louise Collins, Jonathan Holmes, and Jean Ramsey. Speakers explored the evidence base for amblyopia treatments, including the role of refractive correction, expected treatment effects, the best form of occlusion for different patient populations, the role of near activities, recidivism and residual amblyopia. This program was also presented at the American Academy of Ophthalmology annual meeting in Las Vegas in November 2015.

Dr. Ralph Freeman was awarded the Charles F. Prentice Medal and lectured on, “Neural Organization of Binocular Vision.” Dr. Joanne Wood was awarded the Glenn A. Fry Award and spoke about, “Driving Towards a New Vision: Understanding the Role of Vision in Driving.” The Section on Cornea, Contact Lenses and Refractive Technologies honored Dr. Eric B. Papas with the Max Schapero Memorial Lecture Award, and Phil Keefer with the Founder’s Award. The Public Health and Environmental Vision Section honored Dr. Lester Caplan with the Henry B. Peters Memorial Award in Public Health and Environmental Vision.

The Monroe J. Hirsch Symposium, planned by the Academy’s Research Committee, was titled, “Research Matters: How Research Changed Practice.” It focused on key target areas that drive laboratory-based research and the establishment of diagnostic methodologies to test for and monitor therapeutic and post-operative responses. Speakers at the symposium included Drs. Lucia Sobrin, Matthew Petroll, and Andrew Lee.

Concurrent to the Hirsch Symposium, the Scientific Program Committee featured some of the most thought provoking research in three “Hot Topic” paper sessions. These one-hour programs addressed the latest experimental discoveries in the areas of glaucoma, ocular surface disease, and altered visual perception. These were just three of the 19 total scientific paper sessions available to attendees during the meeting. This year’s program marked the return of hybrid “Super Sessions” that combined paper and poster presentations on topics including scleral lenses, refractive error and school performance, and dry eye pathophysiology and treatment.
During these hybrid sessions, authors had the opportunity to give brief summaries of their posters during what was coined the “data blitz.” The Scientific Program also featured several keynote addresses from topic experts to kick-off paper sessions. These special presenters included Drs. Chris Hammond, Susan Cotter, Kenneth Cluffreda, and Nancy McNamara. Over the course of two days of posters, more than 350 authors presented their work.

The ARVO/AAO Joint Symposium, co-sponsored by the Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry Section, centered on major scientific breakthroughs that support the clinical observations that neural plasticity continues beyond early childhood and even into adulthood. Drs. Tawna Roberts, R. Douglas Fields, Benjamin Thompson, Tara Alvarez, and Michael Earley were featured. On Friday morning another trademark program was held, the “Ezell Fellows Present” Symposium. At this event, prior fellowship recipients shared their latest research on the topic of traumatic brain injury. Dr. Kristine Dalton began the session with an overview of concussions and traumatic brain injury that included updates on the diagnosis, management, long-term sequelae, and prognoses for recovery to the visual system. Dr. Andrew Hartwick followed with a talk focused on photophobia and the role of intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells.

A highlight of the meeting was the President’s Banquet on Saturday where new Fellows were inducted into the American Academy of Optometry. Fellows of the Academy must complete a candidacy process that includes submitting written work demonstrating their skills and sitting for an oral examination at the annual meeting of the Academy. About 10% of practicing optometrists in the United States are Fellows of the. Optometrists, scientists, educators, librarians, administrators and editors are eligible to become Fellows of the Academy and earn the right to use FAAO after their name.

In addition, a record 14 individuals were awarded Diplomate status by sections of the Academy in 2015. Diplomates are Fellows of the Academy who demonstrate their skill in a specific area. Nine sections offer diplomate programs: Anterior Segment; Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry; Comprehensive Eye Care; Cornea, Contact Lenses & Refractive Technologies; Glaucoma; Low Vision; Optometric Education; Public Health & Environmental Vision; and Vision Science.

The Academy’s website, at http://www.aoopt.org, includes a past meeting presentation database, links to other vision resources, as well as the Academy’s own online learning program, an index of Optometry and Vision Science journal article abstracts, the AAO newsletter, an on-line meeting program planner and an online Fellowship directory.

In 2014 the Academy started the Career Development Award for early career optometric faculty at schools or colleges of optometry and departments of ophthalmology. Dr. Dean VanNasdale received the award for 2014 and was renewed for 2015. Dr. VanNasdale’s research project aims to identify pathological changes in the retina associated with diabetes and link those changes to early functional vision loss.

The Academy’s journal, Optometry and Vision Science (OVS) had yet another remarkable year with record manuscript submissions and high-ranking international impact factor. OVS transitioned to an online-only format effective January 1, 2016, and our publisher is currently planning improvements and content enhancements to the OVS website. Dr. Michael Twa started as the new Editor-in-Chief on January 1, 2016. Dr. Anthony Adams is currently serving as Associate Editor.

The officers of the Academy for the 2015 and 2016 term are Dr. Brett Bence, President; Dr. Joe Shovlin, President-Elect; Dr. Barbara Caffery, Secretary-Treasurer; and Dr. Bernie Dolan, Immediate Past President. Board Members at large are Drs. Timothy McMahon, Susan Cotter, Jeffrey Walline, and Pete Kollbaum.

May 19, 2016
The American Optometric Foundation (AOF), whose mission is to develop and provide financial support for optometric research and education in vision and eye health to improve clinical patient care, awarded more than $400,000 last year in financial support to 122 students, educators and researchers through a variety of noteworthy platforms. AOF assets are nearly $6 million. This is a result of good stewardship and extraordinary determination by a dedicated base of generous donors and industry sponsors.

For 69 years, the William C. Ezell Fellowship program has provided financial support to top-notch postgraduate students pursuing an academic or research career in optometry and vision science, many of whom are now leaders in the optometric community. In 2015, the Foundation was proud to award ten (10) Ezell Fellowships.

In addition to the Ezell Fellowship program, AOF offers the Allergan Foundation Research Grant to support talented optometry and vision science faculty and researchers in innovative research in the area of glaucoma or anterior segment. The AOF also administers funding for basic and clinical research through grant programs sponsored by the Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Society (BSK), and the Fredric Rosemore Low Vision Educational Grant.

The Foundation continues to receive strong support from numerous visionary supporters and corporations. The AOF has partnered with Vision Service Plan (VSP) to provide scholarships and a travel stipend for attendance to Academy 2016 Anaheim to two deserving students at each U.S. optometry school and college. In addition, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. has partnered with the Foundation to support 60 students, educators, and researchers.

American Optometric Foundation officers for 2015-2016 are Dr. David Kirschen, Brea, CA, President; Dr. Judith Clay, Tallahassee, FL, President-Elect; Dr. Wendy Harrison, Glendale, AZ, Secretary-Treasurer; and Dr. Kathryn Dumbleton, Berkeley, CA, Past-President. Other AOF Board Members are: Drs. Melissa Bailey, Columbus, OH; Dori Carlson, Park River, ND; Pete Kollbaum, Bloomington, IN; Richard Madonna, New York, NY; Jason Nichols, Mountain Brook, AL; and Jeffrey Walline, Columbus, OH; and Mrs. Susan Eger, Moon Township, PA; and Ms. Lois Schoenbrun, Orlando, FL (ex-officio), AAO/AOF Executive Director.

May 19, 2016
ARBO 2015-2016 ACTIVITIES REPORT

The Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) is an organization that represents and assists member licensing agencies in regulating the practice of optometry for the public welfare. ARBO provides resources to licensing boards of optometry throughout North America. Our members include the licensing boards from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, all Canadian provinces, Australia, and New Zealand.

ARBO is currently in its 97th year of operations. During that time we have developed a variety of programs to assist our member boards. We are currently operating the following programs: OE TRACKER for electronic tracking and storage of optometrists’ continuing education attendance data; COPE (Council on Optometric Practitioner Education) for the accreditation of optometric continuing education courses and activities; and CELMO (Council on Endorsed Licensure Mobility for Optometrists) which offers a vehicle of mobility to optometrists looking to relocate.

COPE
COPE accredited 6,000 courses and events in 2015 which were accepted by the state/provincial licensing boards for maintenance of licensure. COPE continued its On-Site Review program in 2015 to ensure COPE-Accredited courses are presented in compliance with the Standards for Commercial Support. A resolution was passed by the delegates at the 2012 ARBO Annual Meeting instructing COPE to “…implement alternative methods of accrediting continuing education similar to those used by other organizations, including the Accreditation council on Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Provider Model of independent, accredited continuing education…” A resolution was passed by the delegates at the 2014 ARBO Annual Meeting expressing support for COPE “…in continuing to improve its own accreditation processes, including pursuing joint inter-professional accreditation of continuing education with other health care professions.” COPE has adopted the Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education’s (ACCME) Accreditation Criteria and developed a new accreditation process to be equivalent with other healthcare professions (medicine, pharmacy and nursing). The COPE Committee has started training COPE Administrators on the new accreditation requirements that will be implemented in January 2017.

CELMO
CELMO offers a method for the state optometry boards to address the issue of licensure by endorsement in a uniform and consistent manner. Fifteen states currently recognize the CELMO certificate as a significant credential when evaluating an actively practicing optometrist for licensure.

OE TRACKER
The growth rate of OE TRACKER has continued to accelerate. The OE TRACKER database now contains 3 million attendance records. More than 49,000 optometrists from the US and Canada have OE TRACKER accounts, and 95% of these contain attendance data. Several state/provincial licensing boards require
their licensees to utilize the OE TRACKER program for tracking their CE hours for relicensure. The OE TRACKER mobile app allows optometrists to record course attendance and review their course history on a smartphone or tablet. The mobile app is used by a variety of CE providers, including 24 state associations, to submit attendance directly to OE TRACKER. Over 115,000 attendance records have been submitted using the mobile app since it was developed.

Office and Staff
ARBO’s headquarters are located in Charlotte, NC with Ms. Lisa Fennell serving as Executive Director.

2015-2016 ARBO Board of Directors
President: Susy Yu, O.D., California
Vice-President: Gregory Moore, O.D., West Virginia
Secretary-Treasurer: Michael O’Hara, JD, PhD, Nebraska
Immediate Past President: Roger Pabst, O.D., Minnesota

Directors: James Campbell, O.D., West Virginia
           Michael Ohlson, O.D., Iowa
           Richard Orgain, O.D., Tennessee
           William Rafferty, O.D., North Carolina
           Jerry Richt, O.D., Tennessee (ex-officio)
           Ernest Schlabach, O.D., Virginia

Consultant: Donovan Crouch, O.D.

2016 Annual Meeting
ARBO’s 2016 Annual Meeting will be held June 26-28, 2016 at Westin Boston Waterfront in Boston, Massachusetts.

More information about ARBO can be found on our website at www.arbo.org. To contact the ARBO office, call 704.970.2710 or email arbo@arbo.org.
The 2015-2016 fiscal year was a busy time of transition for ASCO. Many of the association’s activities focused on accommodating change being experienced now as well as planning for change in the future. Some of our most noteworthy activities are highlighted below.

**ASCO Leadership**

The year has been one filled with leadership transition, as Dr. David Heath winds down his second cycle as ASCO President and Dr. Karla Zadnik prepares for taking over the reins at our board meeting in June, 2016.

Additionally, Ms. Dawn Mancuso joined the organization as the Executive Director in the summer, filling the position vacated by Mr. Marty Wall’s retirement after 24 years of service to ASCO.

**Strategic Planning**

While ASCO has always focused its activities on key strategic initiatives, the organization had not undergone a thorough strategic planning process since 2002. With our new Executive Director in place, the timing was right for the association to undertake a comprehensive process that began in earnest in March, 2016 with a broad stakeholder survey generating over 400 responses; a joint AOA-ASCO board meeting; and a stand-alone strategic planning meeting of various stakeholders from the optometric community.

Work on this new strategic plan is ongoing, and there will be multiple places throughout the process where feedback and input will be sought from those in the community.

**Building Infrastructure**

ASCO has coupled its work on planning for the future planning with a concerted effort to enhance its infrastructure as one of the building blocks for a strong association. Resources have been invested in building a website that is easier to navigate; employing a new membership database and set of online collaborative tools; implementing a new online data collection tool; expanding our presence on several social media outlets; and has started taking a fresh look at internal policies and procedures. All of these actions positions ASCO to better serve its members and the optometric community with the tools necessary to implement a proactive strategic plan.

**75th Anniversary**

The very first annual meeting of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry was held at the Ambassador Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on June 29, 1941. That makes this month ASCO’s 75th Anniversary. Plans are being made to celebrate this noteworthy occasion at our Annual Leadership Luncheon held during Optometry’s Meeting in Boston.

**Applicant Development**

ASCO continues to spend considerable time and resources (approximately $200,000/year) on efforts led by the ASCO-AOA Joint Project Team on Further Developing a Robust, Diverse and Highly Qualified National Applicant Pool. Collateral materials have been developed, and include the True Stories booklet, Be a Doctor of Optometry and Doctors of Optometry Changing Lives Daily videos, Applicant Development section of the ASCO website, redesign of ASCO’s exhibit materials, and Is Optometry for Me? podcast. Our first marketing campaigns included email campaigns to undergraduate students and influencers, Optometry Virtual Fairs, Eye on Optometry blogs, a direct
mail campaign to minority-serving institutions and top high schools, search engine optimization for the website, and a brand-new paid media campaign on social media that was run this applicant cycle.

Preliminary results for the paid media campaign resulted in the highest ever number of website visits in January 2016 (40,499); a 400% increase in blog views, and an increase of 10,000 more hits to the Professional OD Program website.

**Collaboration & Communications**

ASCO is committed to pursuing its objectives in a collaborative manner whenever possible. There were a number of examples this past year where ASCO got to put that commitment into action. For instance, ASCO continues to engage with other optometry associations through the Inter-Organizational Communications and Cooperation Committee (IOCCC). ASCO also held a joint board meeting in September with the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) to identify root causes and potential solutions to recent exam administration challenges; plans are already in the works to continue this dialogue in the year ahead.

Similarly, ASCO held the first-ever Summit on Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice for the optometric community in February. Held at the Southern California College of Optometry, the Summit attracted almost 100 participants from 23 optometry schools and colleges as well as four representatives from other optometry organizations, two academic centers of excellence focused on IPE, a representative from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and 10 representatives from other professions (nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, audiology, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, social work, physician assistants, allopathic medicine, and health administration).

**Government Affairs & Advocacy**

ASCO continues and is looking to expand its work serving as the voice of optometric education on the national stage. We have continued our active engagement in the Federation of Associations of Schools of the Health Professions (FASHP), and the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research/Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR/AEVR). During the current year, we also joined the Contact Lens Patient Safety Coalition, and have supported several important bills such as the Contact Lens Consumer Health Protection Act and the POST GRAD Act.

**Faculty Development**

A big part of ASCO’s activities focus on the development of current and future faculty. Included among our programming in this area was an Online Clinical Education Forum (OCEF) held earlier this month, as well as the ASCO Summer Institute for Faculty Development and the ASCO Future Faculty Program, both held in summer, 2015.

**Specialization**

ASCO is partnering with the American Academy of Optometry (AAO) to explore the concept of sub-specialization within the practice of optometry. To that end, a special ad hoc committee, called the Committee for Sub-Specialization in Low Vision Rehabilitation (CSLVR) has been established and is discussing how such a sub-specialization would work.
Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Society

The Beta Sigma Kappa (BSK) International Optometric Honor Society is an elite group of Optometrists and Optometry students whose mission is to stimulate scientific attainment, academic excellence and the ethical practice of optometry, and to promote and provide financial support for worthy research projects relating to vision care and the eyes.

Founded in 1925 by a small group of optometrists in Illinois, Beta Sigma Kappa now has student chapters in every school and college of optometry in the United States, with two in Canada and one in Puerto Rico. The Society supports the formation and activities of student chapters and works with the schools and colleges to develop programs that foster academic excellence. Members represent scholastic excellence as honor students in the schools and colleges of optometry, as well as noteworthy professionals in the field—educators, scientists, and practitioners.

The Central World Council (CWC) directs and manages the affairs of the Society. CWC members elect officers every two years and hold meetings at the American Academy of Optometry and at Optometry’s Meeting. The current officers are listed below.

- Chancellor, Kierstyn Napier-Dovorany, OD, FAAO
- Immediate Past Chancellor, Executive Director, Mira S. Aumiller, OD, FAAO
- Chancellor-Elect, Nicole Quinn, OD, FAAO
- Vice Chancellor, Lindsay Moran Elkins, OD, FAAO
- Secretary/Treasurer: Ilana Gelfond-Polnariev, OD, FCOVD

The Board of Regents reviews applications for Beta Sigma Kappa research grants and makes recommendations to the CWC. The current members of the Board of Regents are listed below.

- Ann E. Clark, O.D., F.A.A.O.
- Anthony P. Cullen, MSc., O.D., Ph.D., DSc., FCOptom., F.A.A.O., DipCLP.
- Thomas F. Freddo, O.D., Ph.D, F.A.A.O.
- Elizabeth Hoppe, B.S., O.D., M.PH., Dr.PH.
- Gerald E. Lowther, O.D., Ph.D.
- Karla Zadnick, O.D., Ph.D.
- Joan Stelamck, O.D., MPH
- David Troilo, Ph.D.
- Felix Barker, O.D., M.S.
The national organization supports optometric research by awarding student research grants each year to deserving student projects. It also presents the Silver Medal Award to the graduating member with the highest academic record at each optometry school. Active BSK student members are recognized with Membership Certificates upon joining the organization. All graduating active members are provided with gold cord that can be worn during the graduation ceremony to distinguish them as a BSK member. Members that have been in BSK all eligible years of optometry school are honored at graduation with an intertwined black & gold double honor cord.

In 2012, Beta Sigma Kappa partnered with the American Optometric Foundation to provide research grants to optometric faculty and residents. BSK and AOF currently fund two $2,000 grants for residents or new faculty members on research projects that are important to the profession. In 2014, BSK started an endowed grant with COVD, known as the BSK-COVD Research Grant which awards up to $2,000 annually. This grant provides support for optometric faculty and/or resident research in binocular vision and/or visual performance issues.

The student chapters are involved in a variety of activities including tutoring, organization of review sessions and mock proficiencies.

To be eligible for membership, a student must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 after the first professional year, a cumulative GPA of 3.4 in the first two years, a 3.3 cumulative GPA for the first three years and a 3.2 cumulative GPA for all four professional years. Students become Active Members upon graduation. To remain an active member of BSK after graduation, annual dues are required.

In addition, Active Membership in the society is open to:

1. A person who has performed some signal service for or on behalf of the profession of optometry
2. A person of noteworthy professional or scientific attainment in the field of eye and vision care, either as an educator, scientist or practitioner.

CHANCELLOR
Kierstyn Napier-Dovorany, OD, FAAO

CHANCELLOR-ELECT
Nicole Quinn, OD, FAAO

VICE-CHANCELLOR
Lindsay Moran Elkins, OD, FAAO

TREASURER
Ilana Gelfond-Polnariev, OD, FCOVD

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Mira Silbert Aumiller, OD, FAAO

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Report to the AOA House of Delegates
June 2016

The College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD) is an international membership organization and certification body dedicated to the advancement of developmental and behavioral vision care. Our mission is “Improving lives by advancing excellence in optometric vision therapy and rehabilitation through education and board certification.” COVD certifies professional competency in optometric vision therapy, serves as an informational and educational resource, and advances research and clinical care in vision development and therapy.

Members of COVD include optometrists, vision therapists, optometry students and faculty, and vision science researchers. There are currently over 3,300 members of COVD representing 32 countries.

**Board Certification**

Since 1971, COVD has provided a Fellowship process leading to Board Certification in Vision Development and Vision Therapy. The International Examination and Certification Board (IECB), an autonomous board under COVD, confers the certification. Attainment of fellowship provides the public and other health care professionals a means of identifying optometrists who have demonstrated advanced competency in developmental and rehabilitative vision care.

**Academic Services**

The COVD Board of Directors is having another successful year reaching out to optometry students, residents, faculty, and administrators through our “Tour de Optometry” program. All U.S. and Canadian schools and colleges of optometry are visited by a member of the Board or a Past President each academic year.

During the “Tour” program materials are distributed and presentations made about COVD and developmental and rehabilitative optometry. In addition, visits with administration and faculty are arranged to discuss their needs and how COVD can help advance student education in developmental, behavioral, and rehabilitative vision care.

**Publications**

To assist optometrists in remaining current on issues relating to developmental optometry, vision therapy, and vision rehabilitation, COVD publishes a quarterly, refereed journal with Dr. Leonard J. Press as Editor. COVD also
regularly publishes email news briefs to keep the membership and our affiliates up-to-date with the latest COVD news.

We have a public blog and are active on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to help the public and our members keep up to date on the latest news in developmental optometry. This effort in social media has proved to be extremely popular with the membership and with the general public.

**Educational Opportunities**

COVD provides an extensive educational program at its Annual Meeting held in April. A special series of six, two-day in-depth courses on “Applied Concepts in Vision Therapy,” gives optometrists and their staff the opportunity to gain a solid background in the application of vision therapy. Courses this year included *Basic Principles and Procedures of Vision Therapy: Integration of Doctor and Staff for VT Delivery, New Advances in Strabismus and Amblyopia; Optometric Management of Patients with Acquired Brain Injury and Brain Filtering Problems; The Power of Lenses: Assessment and Treatment; and VT 201 for Therapists.*

The COVD Annual Meeting general education program brings in speakers to enhance interdisciplinary understanding and communication, researchers whose work guides clinical care, and optometrists who make this research clinically applicable. In addition to our annual meeting, COVD offers CE courses throughout the year in venues worldwide.

Optometrists seeking to begin or expand care for infants and children in their practices or to offer optometric vision therapy will find the COVD Annual Meeting and our other CE courses an excellent source for expanding their knowledge in these areas. All are invited to attend the COVD 47th Annual Meeting, April 25-29 in Jacksonville, Florida. Check our website, [www.covd.org](http://www.covd.org) for more information on our annual meeting and all COVD educational opportunities.

**International Chapters**

COVD welcomed COVD South Korea as our second international chapter shortly after COVD Canada was recognized as our first chapter. India has initiated the process to become our third international chapter. COVD has always been an international organization and having official international chapters allows us to better meet the needs of our international members and the patients they serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Tannen, OD, FCOVD
President
The International Association of Optometric Executives (IAOE) is an organization of dedicated professionals serving state, regional, specialty, and national associations of doctors of Optometry and the patients they serve. IAOE has over 80 members, a majority of which are the executive directors or associate executive directors of state optometric associations.

In June 2015, the following individuals were elected to serve as IAOE officers until June 2016: President Jim Zieba, JD (Indiana), President-Elect Linda Ross Aldy (Mississippi), Vice President Howard Cooper (New Jersey), Secretary-Treasurer Stacey Meier, OD (Arizona), and Immediate Past President Peter Theo (Wisconsin). IAOE will hold elections on June 29, 2016 and new officers will be installed immediately after the elections.

IAOE serves the dual purposes of improving the knowledge base and skills of optometric executives and disseminating information that is unique to optometric associations and the profession of Optometry. Little happens in a vacuum in the realm of associations so the sharing of information, procedures, and best practices are critical for the success of organized Optometry.

Although IAOE members keep in regular contact throughout the year by Listserv and a Facebook closed group, the association holds two meetings per year, one in June - in conjunction with Optometry's Meeting ®- and one in the fall. In June, the association holds elections and conducts other organizational business, such as the consideration and passage of resolutions and changes to the IAOE Bylaws. Education and the sharing of best practices is the primary purpose of the fall meeting.

In November 2015 IAOE members met for 2.5 days in New Orleans, LA. The primary presenter at the meeting was Bob Harris, CAE, who gave interactive presentations on organizational excellence, risk awareness, committee responsibilities, strategic planning, and best practices. IAOE members also heard from representatives of ARBO and the AOA regarding proposed changes to COPE-accreditation planned to take place on January 1, 2017. Additionally, IAOE members received updates from AOA staff on AOA and Congressional matters, shared the status of state legislative issues, and discussed the penetration of accountable care associations (ACOs) in America.

Over the past year, IAOE members have shared ideas and information with each other on a host of issues and topics, including state association bylaws, online CE, membership categories, legislation, local societies, political action committees, websites, member recruitment, non-member assistance, association software packages, and organizational restructuring. Additionally, IAOE made its concerns known to ARBO about how ARBO's proposed changes in COPE-accreditation will dramatically increase the workload and costs of optometric associations.
Over the last year, a Task Force within the Optometry Academy has worked hard to update our policy statement that describes the profession’s role in today’s health care environment.

The Role of Optometry in Interdisciplinary Health Care

Doctors of Optometry (O.D.s/Optometrists) are primary health care professionals. As licensed, independent health care professionals, Doctors of Optometry play a primary and integral role in interdisciplinary health care by examining, diagnosing, treating, and managing diseases, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures. Doctors of Optometry are involved in the coordination of care of associated systemic diseases and zoonotic diseases and serve a sentinel role in the identification of ocular side effects of systemic medications. Doctors of Optometry are defined as physicians under Medicare, and are an essential part of the national health care delivery system providing direct patient access to health care in nearly 6,500 communities across the country. In 3,500 of these communities, Doctors of Optometry are the only providers of vision and eye health care services.

Doctors of Optometry:

- Practice in many different healthcare settings that include private and group practice, within hospitals, Accountable Care Organizations, Federally Qualified Health Centers, School Based Health Centers, Rural Health Clinics, Certified Nursing Facilities, Rehabilitation Facilities, U.S. Armed Forces, Veterans Health Administration, Indian Health Service, Civil Service, and other settings.
- Assist with improving overall population health and quality of life through prevention and early diagnosis of vision and eye health problems and prevention of chronic disease.
- Detect systemic diseases through identification of associated eye findings during a comprehensive face-to-face eye examination. There are over 275 systemic conditions with ocular involvement.
- Participate in Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) and Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) and other quality initiatives to improve patient outcomes and wellness by enhanced disease prevention and patient education for behaviors that have been linked to
systemic diseases with known vision and eye findings including but, not limited to hypertension, obesity, diabetes, smoking, and UV exposure.

- Are essential to the implementation of the comprehensive pediatric vision care benefit mandated by the Affordable Care Act and attending regulations.
- Coordinate the vision, eye health, and wellness of their patients with fellow Optometrists and other health care providers.
- Offer services to assist individuals with functional vision problems, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment and blindness. Treatments may include vision therapy or tools to address functional vision problems or vision rehabilitation for those with vision impairment with the goal to optimize vision and maintain independence and quality of life.
- Provide a continuum of patient-centered care for people of all ages focused on prevention, health maintenance, acute care, chronic care, habilitation, and/or rehabilitation, with special emphasis on minimizing life-long impacts and the burden of visual impairment on at-risk populations that include aging adults and the very old, as well as infants and children.

Updated: March 28, 2016

Special Thanks to NAPO Task Force Members for all their efforts. Drs. Doug Benoit - Chair, Sandra Block, Jim Boucher, Dori Carlson, Linda Casser, Jan Cooper, Paul Harris, Elizabeth Hoppe, Clarke Newman, Shilpa Register, Glen Steele, Jim Thimons, John Townsend and Satya Verma.

Respectfully submitted,

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www.navao.org

National Association of VA Optometrists Update for the AOA House of Delegates

The National Association of VA Optometrists (NAVAO) held the organization’s annual meeting in conjunction with the American Academy of Optometry conference in New Orleans, Louisiana on Thursday, October 8, 2015 at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside. Invited guests from the schools and colleges of optometry, as well as key professional optometric organizations, were in attendance. The delegation from the American Optometric Association included Dr. Steven A. Loomis (President, AOA) and Mr. Jon Hymes (Executive Director, AOA). Dr. Loomis addressed the NAVAO membership at the meeting on behalf of the AOA. The NAVAO keynote speaker was Dr. Kenneth Jones, the Director of Associated Health Education in the VA Office of Academic Affiliations. Additionally, Dr. John Townsend, VA Director of Optometric Services, delivered an address to the NAVAO membership. In 2015, NAVAO awarded eight scholarships to active NAVAO resident members in support of attendance at the AAO meeting. The scholarships were supported by International Engineering Technology (6) and NAVAO (2). Any VA staff, attending, consultant, research/clinical fellow, resident optometrist, or other optometrist having an interest in VA optometry is eligible for membership in the NAVAO. NAVAO would like to thank the AOA for their continued partnership with VA Optometry and for their dedicated support over the years.
Dear House of Delegates,

NORA is an Optometric organization of committed individuals from various disciplines whose focus is on advancing the art and science of rehabilitation for the neurologically challenged patient. We invite membership on an interdisciplinary basis to promote the best possible visual care for the patient in need. This is a brief summary of our organization over the past year.

April 2015 – Annual meeting in Denver Colorado with a number of speakers including Clark Elliott, PhD, author of “The Ghost In My Brain: How a Concussion Stole my Life”. We broke our attendance record for the third year in a row and reached a total of over 250 attendees.

January 2016 – Clinical skills program in Austin, TX. Courses including Clinical Skills 1 and 2, as well as an Advanced Curriculum course titled: “Visual Attention and Memory in the Normal and Neurologically Comprised Patient: Neuro-Optometry’s Role in Developing and Recapturing Perceptual and Cognitive Skills” and “Clue, Cues and Cruise Control-How to assess three processing levels affected by optometric intervention”.

July 2016 AOA Optometry's Meeting – Our organization strongly supports AOA and we have multiple members who will attend and several are also on the board of the AOA Vision Rehabilitation Section. We will also have a presentation with our student liaison at the AOSA meeting. Visual Rehabilitation is clearly an important aspect of Optometry and we strongly support it.

Our membership currently stands at 247 optometrists, 30 others and 172 students.

Respectfully submitted,
Curtis Baxstrom,OD
President, Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association
North Central Member States include Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

NCSOC officers for 2015-16 were President Darren Wright, OD of Nebraska and Vice-President/Treasurer Paul Hodge, OD of Michigan. Dave McBride served as the Executive Director.

The North Central States Cabinet is comprised of the President, President-Elect and Executive Director of each Member state. The Cabinet met in conjunction with AOA Presidents’ Council in both June and January. AOA officers met with the Cabinet at both meetings for a dialogue about AOA priorities and an opportunity for input from the NCSOC state leaders.

NCSOC hosted a conference call in November for state leaders to share ideas related to membership development and membership retention. Guest presenters from Georgia, Oregon, and Mississippi shared recent successes in their states in addition to an exchange of information among our Member states.

A second conference call in early June provided an opportunity for Member state leaders to interview candidates for the AOA Board of Trustees in advance of Optometry’s Meeting, offering additional insight that helps individual states evaluate and discuss opinions about candidates and providing a foundation for the Cabinet’s consideration of AOA leadership.

North Central sponsors the Virgil Deering Executive Director of the Year award to recognize outstanding staff professionals from AOA affiliates across the country and was pleased to present the 16th annual award to Nancy Kopp of North Dakota at last year’s AOA House of Delegates.
Northern Rockies Optometric Conference

The Northern Rockies Optometric Conference was held July 22-25, 2015 in beautiful Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The conference was at the newly renovated Snow King Resort and featured an agenda with social time, great education, and an Exhibit Hall that had record numbers. The intimate venue gave OD’s from across the country a unique opportunity to interact with speakers and peers on a higher level. Featured speakers were Ben Gaddie, OD, Mark Dunbar, OD, and Rebecca Wartman, OD. Also in attendance was Dr. David Cockrell, AOA President to participate and speak to attendees regarding issues important to the profession. The conference also included education for the Paraoptometric Staff in which they earned ABO, CPC, and NCLE credits.

Held each July, the Northern Rockies Optometric Conference is always a great way to get continuing education in a scenic setting that offers close proximity to Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and many outdoor recreational activities for the whole family. This conference is open to all optometrists and staff from across the country. For more information: www.nrocmeeting.com

Contact:
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31 May 2016

2015-16 Annual Report to the AOA House of Delegates

The Optometric Extension Program Foundation is an international organization (Organized in the US as a 501C-3 Not For Profit Corporation in the State of California) dedicated to the advancement of the discipline of optometry through the gathering and dissemination of information on vision and the visual process. Our mission is to advance human progress through research and education on vision, the visual process, and clinical care.

The main goals of the OEP Foundation are to educate optometrists and their staff in the concepts of clinical vision care, encourage research into human vision and the visual process, provide education necessary for the discipline of optometry to emerge as an independent profession worldwide, develop a cadre of willing and able leaders for the continued support of optometry, provide access to instruments, equipment, publications, and materials supportive of the discipline of optometry related to the educational mission of the Foundation and educate the public and the professions about the importance of visual health and hygiene, the prevention of visual and ocular problems, an understanding of visual development, visual rehabilitation, and the enhancement of vision and the visual process.

Current total enrollment in OEP is now over 3,000 and includes optometrists, vision therapists, students, faculty, and other optometric professionals from over 30 countries worldwide.

Leadership (As of June 26, 2016)

President: Robin Lewis, OD | Chandler, Arizona, USA
Vice President: Eric Ikeda, OD  |  Bellflower, California, USA
Secretary/Treasurer: John Abbondanza, OD | Southboro, Massachusetts, USA
Director/Trustee: Patricia Fink, OD | Burlington, Ontario, Canada
Director/Trustee: John Stevenson, OD | Stoke-on-Trent, England, UK

Relocation
We are excited to announce the opening of the OEP National Education Center located in Timonium, Maryland. We made the move in July of 2015 and held our grand opening event and first education event in September of 2015. Since that time we have hosted education events on a monthly basis and welcomed attendees and speakers from all around the world including Malaysia, Belgium, Australia, Canada, and others. The new space includes a classroom with equipment for hands-on learning experiences as well as all OEP administrative offices and publishing equipment. We are happy to call Maryland home and look forward to joining the Maryland Optometric Association later this year.

Education
The OEP Clinical Curriculum, a 4-part series of courses totaling 126 hours of CE was offered in multiple sites around the world including the US, Canada, Greece, Germany, and Australia. Courses were also held at Southern College of Optometry, Western University of Health Sciences, and at NOVA Southeastern University as well as OEP Education Centers in Maryland, Michigan, and Arizona.

Regional Clinical Seminars were held at sites throughout the United States and also in Canada and Australia. Annual Regional Congresses continue to be held at 7 sites throughout the United States.
2016 will bring our first hybrid learning course which is made up of online modules and hands-on workshop sessions. This is a 12-18 month course designed as an introduction to vision therapy for optometrists and their vision therapists. The first workshop session is scheduled for October 8-9, 2016 in our Maryland location. The next International Congress of Behavioral Optometry (ICBO) will be held April 26-29, 2018 in Sydney, Australia. Our partner organization, the Australasian College of Behavioral Optometrists (ACBO), will be the local host.

Publications
The OEP Foundation and our partner, the Australasian College of Behavioral Optometrists (ACBO), continue to publish our international peer-reviewed journal, *Optometry & Visual Performance (OVP)*. The journal is available in online format which has increased readership and authorship tremendously. The journal is now read regularly in over 60 countries worldwide. Archived issues can be accessed at [www.ovpjournal.org](http://www.ovpjournal.org). The Editor in Chief is Dr. Marc Taub from Southern College of Optometry and the Managing Editor is Dr. Pamela Schnell also from Southern College of Optometry. The review board is comprised of colleagues from around the world in various practice settings and universities.


The OEP Foundation continues to publish multiple titles each year. The newest title is “Crossed and Lazy Eyes” by Pilar Vergara of Spain. This work was translated into English for our publication. Our next title, due out in July, is “Compendium of works on visual rehabilitation: Volume 1” by Kenneth J. Ciuffreda, OD.

Outreach
Our Optometrists Change Lives™ campaign, which aims to bring awareness to the many different ways optometrists can and do change the lives of the patients they care for, has been a great success. Under this campaign we have hosted dozens of programs for optometry students at over 15 of the optometry schools in the US and Canada as well as one in Mexico! These are often success stories shared by patients themselves such as Jillian Benoit (Author of “Jillian’s Story”) and Dr. Susan (Stereo Sue) Barry. Last year we hosted new programs that included a lecture on sports vision by Dr. Geoffrey Heddle, a lecture on optometric care for patients with special needs by Dr. Gabrielle Marshall, and a lecture on Strabismus by Dr. Samantha Slotnick. We also hosted tours of a neuro-rehabilitation facility in California.

Under the Optometrists Change Lives™ campaign, we also publish a calendar that features 12 optometric success stories each year and distribute them to our members as well as parents and patients around the world. There is a fundraising arm for this campaign and charitable donations have increased by more than 50% since its start.

We continue to distribute the Binocular Vision Kits as an AOSA member benefit item for third year optometry students. Our partners and sponsors for this kit include the Rosemore Family Foundation, GoodLite, HOYA, and Vision Tap. The kit continues to evolve and contain new materials and information about binocular vision.

Within the profession, we have continued to strengthen our existing partnerships as well as add new ones. New partnerships include: Canadian Optometrists in Vision Therapy and Rehabilitation (COVT&R), European Academy of Optometry & Optics (EAOO), Asociación Mexicana de Facultades, Escuelas, Colegios y Consejos de Optometría A.C. (AMFECCO), and the World Council of Optometry (WCO).

Summary
2015 was a big year for the OEP Foundation. Our new location and education space has allowed us to fulfill our mission and goals in ways we could not previously. We continue to update systems and review our processes and policies in order to build into the future. Enrollment continues to grow annually and we are excited for the future!
The great statesman Winston Churchill said it best: “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” In our case, we actually have a dual privilege. We discover this every day in our work helping patients maintain healthy vision. That may be part of what we get and give but we also give in so many ways through the nation’s leading charity for vision care – Optometry Cares®.

Last year alone, InfantSEE®, the Foundation’s flagship program, provided comprehensive eye and vision assessments to more than 8,700 infants. Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2015, optometrists’ compassionate care has reached more than 127,000 babies since the program’s inception. The story and viral sensation of baby Piper goes well beyond sheer statistics. Dr. Young diagnosed Piper’s hyperopia and prescribed corrective spectacles. This 10-month-old infant was able to see her parents with clear vision for the first time. Captured on camera and viewed more than 40 million time online, these life-changing moments made possible by our care.

This year, VISION USA reaches a milestone of 25 years of serving those less fortunate, providing more than 430,000 exams to low-income individuals across the country since the inception of the program in 1991.

We also support optometry through Optometry’s Fund for Disaster Relief, which has provided nearly $500,000 to help optometrists get back on their feet after experiencing a natural disaster. Your generosity also empowers future generations through our Endowment and Scholarship program. Annually, Optometry Cares awards over $25,000 in optometry student scholarships.

We continue to honor optometrists who have made significant, long-lasting contributions to the profession through our National Optometry Hall of Fame. Preserving the past also honors the industry’s leaders, achievements, and progress. The Archives and Museum of Optometry oversees the collection and care of optometric publications, artifacts, and historical records. The Archives and Museum continues to be an invaluable repository of the industry’s history and tradition that has ensured future generations will have access to records and archives. The Optometric Historical Society recognizes and supports the preservation of archival material, making optometric research and scholarship possible.

All of this occurs right in our backyard, in our communities, because of the overwhelming financial support of AOA member donors and corporate sponsors. Lending a hand further fuels our reach, with more providers than ever stepping up to use their skills to expand eye care access to more Americans.
2015 – 2016 Activities Report
THE SOUTHERN COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRISTS, INC.
AND SECO INTERNATIONAL, LLC

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Council of Optometrists, Inc., (SoCO) is pleased to have this opportunity to provide a report of its activities for the 119th Annual Congress of the American Optometric Association.

Highlights of SECO International 2016
In our 93rd year of providing exceptional continuing education for optometrists and eye care professionals, the theme for SECO 2016 was “The Big Picture – Widen Your Perspective”. The theme was designed to emphasize the importance of education and expanding your horizons and broadening your knowledge, skill and understanding of a subject – SECO 2016 delivered a look at the big picture of optometric practice. SECO 2016 continued to uphold the tradition of the “Education Destination” for all of eye care. We offered 28 joint OD and Allied Ophthalmic Professionals (AOP) courses (Team-Centered Learning) totaling 40 hours; and a total of 245 courses offering a total of 334 course hours of continuing education (OD and AOP).

SECO’s online education resource center, SECO University, launched in November of 2014 currently has 1,210 OD subscribers and 943 AOP subscribers. Participants must subscribe to the service for a year. However, if an OD registered for the “All-Inclusive” registration package for SECO 2016, they received this year for free. The annual SECO University includes the following resources:

- 120+ hours of online CE
- 9 years of SECO Audio Course Recordings (1,000+ hours)
- 5 years of Multimedia Posters from the Advanced Media Learning Center at SECO
- The AOP SECO 2017 attendees who chose the “All-Inclusive” package are also now able to access a section of the site as well, which includes approvals from ABO/NCLE, JCAHPO, and AOA (para).

The strategic partnerships of our mission statement grew again this past year by working with the Energeyes Association. Energeyes hosted a meeting on Sunday, February 28 which attracted over 60 attendees.

The Armed Forces Optometric Society (AFOS) and College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD) continued to partner with SECO and we are currently planning their 2017 programs.

SECO was honored to receive the Orion award from the Armed Forces Optometric Society this year. The Orion award is the highest honor that AFOS can bestow for most significant contributions to the advancement of AFOS and Optometry.

The Optometrist of the South Award was presented to Dr. Dale Morris of Forrest City, Arkansas; the Young Optometrist of the South Award was presented to Denise Burns-Legros, O.D. of Melbourne, Florida; and the Paraoptometric of the South Award was presented to Linda Hardy, LDO-GA, CPOT, COA, ABOC, NCLC, RMA, of Newnan, Georgia.
SECO 2016 hosted over 300 students and residents and highlights included:

- As an organization dedicated to education, we are proud to continue to support and invest in future optometrists with funding to the three optometry schools located in our member states. We provided each with $15,000 in funding, in addition to the $3,000 we give in Clinical Excellence Awards.

- Every year, we are honored to host a “SECO Day” event at Nova Southeastern University, Southern College of Optometry and University of Alabama at Birmingham and provide students who attend a $100 stipend to help pay for travel and expenses at SECO 2017.

- SECO partnered with OptometryStudents.com in 2013 to promote the SECO Congress and continued that partnership in 2016. At SECO 2016, we hosted 5 reporters who blogged and promoted SECO via Facebook/Twitter and Instagram.

**International Outreach**

This year has been about our mission more than ever: “To advance the profession of optometry worldwide through education, professional networking and strategic partnerships.” As part of our partnership with the Association of Optometrists (UK), this year’s London 2016 meeting will be held **September 25-26** in London and planning for this event is underway.

For SECO 2016 we held our second International Leaders Forum where in representatives from our associate member organizations including Association of Optometrists (AOP), United Kingdom; Trinidad & Tobago Optometrists Association (TTOA); Federacion Colombiana de Optometras (FEDOPTO); South African Optometric Association (SAOA); World Council of Optometry (WCO); and representatives from Costa Rica. Also participating were representatives from NSU and SCO and several SECO Officers and Board of Trustee representatives. By all accounts, the Forum format was a success and similar plans are on track for SECO 2017.

**Board of Trustees**

The Board currently comprises the following individuals:

David M. Rouse, O.D. (FL)  Steven Reed, O.D. (MS)  Christine Cook, O.D. (VA)

**Executive Committee**

The following Optometrists comprise the membership of the 2016 – 2017 Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee of the Southern Council of Optometrists are elected and installed annually during SoCO’s House of Delegate’s Meeting.

Ted McElroy, O.D.  President  Max Ernst, O.D.  Treasurer
Lynn Hammonds, O.D.  President Elect  Max Raynor, O.D.  Secretary
Emilio Balius, O.D.  Vice President  Stan Dickerson, O.D.  Past President

**SECO International 2017**

The next SECO International will be held March 1-5, 2017, in Atlanta, Georgia.
World Council of Optometry

Report to the 119th Congress of the American Optometric Association

Our vision is of a world where optometry makes high quality eye health and vision care accessible to all people. Our mission is to promote eye health and vision care as a human right. This is achieved through advocacy, education, policy development and humanitarian outreach and is intended to facilitate the development of optometry and optometrists around the world. WCO is the only optometric body in official relations with the World Health Organisation.

Recent and ongoing WCO activities include:

- Relocation to AOA Headquarters in St. Louis and appointment of new staff.
- Coordinating support by WCO members—including AOA—of the formal recognition of optometry around the world, including Italy, Brazil, and France. Support of the Indian Optometric Association advanced regulation, resulting in approval of a four-year degree curriculum by the Ministry of Health.
- Collaborating with strategic partners including IAPB, BHVI, WHO, OGS to advance provision of eye and vision care worldwide.
- Advocacy training in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.
- Optometry practitioner mapping to inform manpower and education needs.
- Collaboration on development of online education for optometrists worldwide.
- Holding the 1st World Congress of Optometry in 2015 in Medellin, Colombia, attracting over 3,000 local and international delegates.
- Hosting the first Presidential Forum to enable wider engagement with the profession, resulting in the Medellin Declaration—a blueprint for the future of world optometry.
- Preparation for 2nd World Congress of Optometry in Hyderabad, India, September 11-13, 2017.

Please join us to help shape the future of optometry